

Distinct Linguistic Identity of Bhoyari, Pawari, and Powari in the Linguistic Survey of India

Sir George A. Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India* (LSI) provides a clear linguistic distinction between **Bhoyari**, **Pawari**, and **Powari**, treating them as three separate linguistic varieties rather than as a single language or dialect. Their classification is based on differences in linguistic affiliation, geographical distribution, and speech communities, and each is described independently in the Survey.

Powari is described in **Volume VI (1904)** of the *Linguistic Survey of India* under the **Indo-Aryan Family, Mediate Group** as a variety of **Eastern Hindi**. It is principally spoken in **eastern Vidarbha (Maharashtra)** and the adjoining districts of **Balaghat, Seoni, and Chhindwara** in present-day Madhya Pradesh. The Survey associates Powari primarily with the **Powar (Panwar) community**, while also recognizing it as the language of other native speakers residing in this linguistic region. A separate linguistic specimen is included for Powari.

In contrast, **Bhoyari** is described independently in **Volume IX (1908)**, **Indo-Aryan Family, Central Group, Part II**. It is identified as a distinct speech variety of the **Central Indo-Aryan Group** and is associated with the **Bhoyar community** of Central India. Likewise, **Pawari** is separately described in the same volume as the **Bundeli variety spoken in the Datia State**, forming part of the **Bundeli subgroup of the Central Indo-Aryan Group**. It represents the regional speech of the Datia area rather than the language of the Powar (Panwar) community. Separate linguistic specimens are also provided for both Bhoyari and Pawari, demonstrating that each was examined and documented independently.

The placement of **Powari** in **Volume VI (Eastern Hindi–Mediate Group)** and **Bhoyari** and **Pawari** in **Volume IX (Central Group, Part II)** reflects Grierson's scientific linguistic classification based on phonological, grammatical, lexical, and geographical characteristics. Their inclusion under different linguistic groups, their association with different speech communities, and their separate descriptive entries and linguistic specimens establish that they were not regarded as synonymous or interchangeable varieties.

The *Linguistic Survey of India*, conducted under the authority of the Government of India and published as an official survey between 1903 and 1928, remains one of the most authoritative sources on the languages and dialects of the Indian subcontinent. Its classification recognizes **Bhoyari**, **Pawari**, and **Powari** as **distinct linguistic varieties**, each possessing its own linguistic identity, geographical distribution, and historical speech tradition. This classification continues to be accepted as an authoritative reference in linguistic and historical research in India.

Bhoyari Dialect

THE BROKEN MĀLVĪ OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES.

Mālvī is spoken, but in a corrupt form, being much mixed with Bundēli and Nimāḍī, in parts of the Hoshangabad and Betul Districts. With this may be classed the corrupt forms of Mālvī used by the Bhōyars and Katīyās of Chhindwara, and the Paṭwās, or silk-weavers, of Chanda. I shall deal briefly with each of these. The following is the estimated number of speakers of these broken dialects :—

Mālvī of Hoshangabad	126,523
Mālvī of Betul (called Dhōlēwārī)	119,000
<u>Bhōyārī of Chhindwara</u>	<u>11,000</u>
Katīyārī of Chhindwara	18,000
Paṭwārī of Chanda	200
TOTAL	274,723

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BHŌYARĪ OF CHHINDWARA.

We have just seen that the Bhōyars of Betul claim to have come from Dhārā-nagarī, and speak a broken Mālvī. In the adjoining district of Chhindwara the local Bundēli is often mechanically mixed with Marāṭhī, and examples have been given in Vol. IX., Pt. I. The Bhōyars of Chhindwara have retained their original Mālvī, but, in the same way, have mixed it with Marāṭhī, so that it has become a broken patois. A few lines of a version of the Parable of the Prodigal Son will be sufficient to illustrate it. The number of speakers is estimated at 11,000. Note the way in which a final ē is often represented by a. This is borrowed from Nimāḍī and also agrees with the practice of the Marāṭhī of Berar.

[No. 51.]

INDO-ARYAN FAMILY.

CENTRAL GROUP.

RĀJASTHĀNĪ.

MĀLVĪ (BHŌYARĪ BROKEN DIALECT).

(DISTRICT CHHINDWARA).

कोनी एक मानुस-ला दुई बेटा होता । ते-म-को नान्हो बाप-ला कहन लाग्यो बाबा म-ला
म्हरा हिस्सा-को धन आय-हे त्यू दे । तब आ-ने धन ओ-ला बाट-दियो । तब थोड़ा दिन-भ
नान्हो बेटा समघो जमा कर-कन दूर सुलुक-म गयो आउर वहाँ वाहियात-पना कर-कन आपलो
पेसो उडायो । तब ओ-न अवघो खर्चा उपर बना सुलुक-म मोठो दुष्काल पयो । ओ-ना बिपत पडन
लागी । तब वो वोन सुलुक-मा एक भला मानुस-के जवर रख्यो ॥

PĀWĀRĪ BUNDĒLĪ OF DATIA AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

Pāwārī is the name for the variety of Bundēlī which is spoken in those parts of the Gwalior and Bundelkhand Agencies of Central India, in which the Paramāra or Pāwār Rājput̄s are one of the principal clans. In the Bundelkhand Agency it is spoken in the tract lying to the west of the Jhansi District, which includes the State of Datia, and the Alampur Pargana of the State of Indore. In Gwalior it is spoken in the tract adjoining Datia, i.e. in the east of the Gird Gwalior, and in the Bhandar Districts of that State.

The number of its speakers is reported as follows:—

Bundelkhand Agency	203,500
Gwalior	150,000
TOTAL	353,500

Pāwārī hardly differs at all from ordinary Bundēlī. It has a few local peculiarities, most of which it shares with the Lodhāntī just described. This will be evident from the following folktale, which, like so many of these Bundēlī specimens, has been prepared by Rai Sahib Kashi Pershad of Charkhari. We may note the following words which do not occur in ordinary dictionaries:—

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INDO-ARYAN FAMILY.

CENTRAL GROUP.

WESTERN HINDĪ.

BUNDĒLĪ (PĀWĀRĪ).

(STATE, DATIA.)

(*Rai Sahib Kashi Pershad.*)

एक साहूकार एक तलाव-के किनारे रतो । एक दिन एक कंगाल साहूकार-के इतै मांगवे-कौं आओ । साहूकार बोलो कि जो तलाव-में सब रात ठाड़ो-रहै बाए में बीस रुपैया देव । कंगाल बोलो मैं ठाड़ो रखौंगी और साहूकार-सें तीन बेर कुवा-के रुपयन-की पक्की कर लई । और कंगाल तलाव-में रात-के समैयाँ जाय-केँ ठाड़ो भओ । और हुन-बीचाँ बाए कोऊ ना दिखावे अकेलैँ एक दिया दूर गाँव-के दिवाले-में उजरत दिखावे । सो बाए अपनी नजर-सें लखैँ रतो । सकारैँ तलाव-में-सें कढ़-केँ साहूकार-के ठिकाँ गओ और साहूकार-सें बोलो कि रुपैया देव । साहूकार बोलो जा तौ बता रात भर तो-कौं काऊ-कौ आसरौ तौ नाई रओ । कंगाल बोलो मोए काऊ-कौ आसरौ नाई रओ । अकेलैँ दिवाले-में एक दिया उजरत दिखात-रओ । साहूकार-नेँ कही कि तै-नेँ सब रात दिया-सें तापो और बाए कछू ना दओ ।

बौ हाइ-पिंगला करत चलो गयो । गेल-में बाए एक लिँरैया मिलो
 और पूँछी कि हाइ-पिंगला कैसी करत-जात-है । बा-नेँ सब हाल कहि
 सुनायो । लिँरैया बोली कि में रुपैया तोए दिबा देहौँ । अकेलेँ तैं मोए
 कोल-कदैयाँ धर लै-चल और इत-ई-कौ-इत-ई उतार जाइये । और पैलाँ
 गाँव-में के आ कि बन-कौ राजा आउत-है सो अपने अपने कुत्ता बाँध लिव ।
 कंगाल गाँव-में के आयो और लिँरैया-कौँ लिवा-गयो । लिँरैया-नेँ जा-केँ
 पंचाइत जोरी और कही कि दो खम्भ गार-देव जा-सेँ सीँका बाँध-देव और
 जा-में चावरन-कौ इंडी धर-देव और तरें आग बार-देव कि चावर चुर-
 जावें । पंच बोले केँ इंडी दूर टंगी-है । पाँच ना लगहै । चावर कैसेँ
 चुरहैं । लिँरैया बोली कि दिया-सेँ तापत कैसेँ हैं । ऐसेँ चावर चुरहैं ।

पंच कहू ना बोले । लिँरैया बोली कि ना दिया-सेँ कंगाल-नेँ तापो-है ना
 चावर चुरहैं । बाए रुपैया गिन-देव । और साङ्गकार-सेँ बाए रुपैया गिना-
 दए । कंगाल-नेँ रुपैया लै-केँ लिँरैया-कौँ कोल-कदैयाँ धरो और बन-में बाए
 उतार-आयो और फिर अपने घरे गयो ॥

Powari

Pōwārī is the language of the Pōwārs, an agricultural tribe which traces its origin to the Rajput Pramaras of Malwa, whence the members of the caste have spread over northern India and in later times formed the extensive colonies which we find in the Waingangā valley at the present day. The traditional home of these members of the tribe is Dhar in Central India. Although Pōwārs are found all over the Central Provinces, a distinct Pōwār dialect has been reported only from the Districts of Chhindwara, Balaghat, and Bhandara. Further inquiry shows that even this return erred by excess, for the Pōwārs of Chhindwara are now stated to have no peculiar dialect of their own. The number of Pōwārs in Bhandara and Balaghat are, according to the Census of 1891, as follows :—

Balaghat	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	43,564
Bhandara	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	70,040

The number of speakers of Pōwārī returned from these districts is much less than the above, *viz.*,—

Balaghat	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	41,300
Bhandara	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,700
TOTAL										43,000

Pōwārī, like Marārī, cannot be properly called a dialect. It is really a jargon, the basis of which is the Baghēli which we find in Mandla, mixed up very freely with forms coming from the original home of the tribe in Western Rajputana, and with Marāṭhī. For instance, in the following specimens, words like *dēis*, he gave; *lēis*, he took, are Baghēli; but *kōnhī*, a certain; *hōtā*, they were; *āparō* or *aparō*, own; and the case sign *-lā*, are corruptions of Marāṭhī; and *sē*, is; and *khan*, in *kar-khan*, having done, come from Western Rajputana. Note also the use of *nē* with a Baghēli past tense, which we have noted in Marārī.

Two short specimens of Pōwārī are given, one from Balaghat, and the other from Bhandara.

Source : Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. VI: Indo-Aryan Family, Mediate Group—Specimens of the Eastern Hindi Language, compiled and edited by G. A. Grierson, C.I.E., Ph.D., D.Litt., I.C.S., Calcutta, 1904.

INDO-ARYAN FAMILY.

MEDIATE GROUP.

EASTERN HINDI.

BAGHELĪ (PŌWĀRĪ BROKEN) DIALECT.

(DISTRICT BALAGHAT.)

कोन्ही मानुस-का दुइ बेटा होता । ओ-मा-ल्ले लाइनो-ने अपरे बाप-ला कहिस हे बाबा सम्पति-मा-ल्ले जो मोरो हिस्सा से ऊ दे-देव । मग वो-ने उन-ला आपरो धन बाँट देइस । जुग रोज नहीं भया, नाइनो बेटा सब येकु-जिया कर-खन दूर देस-ला चली गयो । वहाँ जाय-खन लुचपना-माँ सब सम्पति खोय देइस । जब वो सब उड़ाय देइस मग उन देस-मेँ अकाल पड़ेव । अखिन ऊ गरीब भै गयो । अखिन ऊ जाय-खन वने देस-के रहनार-मा-ल्ले एक घरे रहन लगेव । जे-ने ओ-ला आपलो खेत-माँ डूकर चरावन-ला पहुँचाइस । अखिन ऊ उन खोलपा-मा-ल्ले जे-ला डूकर खात होती, आपन पेट भरन चाहोत होतो अखिन कोन्ही नही ओ-ला काही देत होतो ॥

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INDO-ARYAN FAMILY.

MEDIATE GROUP.

EASTERN HINDI.

BAGHELĪ (PŌWĀRĪ BROKEN) DIALECT.

(DISTRICT BHANDARA.)

एक मानुस-ला दुई बेटा होता । ओ-को नहानो बेटा बाबा-ला कहोत होतो, बाबा, मोरो माल-मत्तो-का हिस्सा मोरो तोड दो । मंग आपरो माल-मत्ता बाट देइस । मंग धाकटो बेटा माल-मत्ता जमा कर-कन दूर देस-की निकल गयो । अनिक अपरो मन-ले बरतावा कर-लेइस, सबी संपत उड़ाय देइस । वोतई जमा खरच डाइस । ओन मुलुख-मो बडा दुकार पड़्यो होतो ओन बात-सो लंगी जा-से वो-ला । ओ-को बाद ओन मुलुख-की एक मानुस-के जवर रड़्यो । ओन डूकर चरावन अपरे खेत-म धाडिस । ओ-ने डूकरन फोल खाइस । उच फोल खाय-के अपरो पेट भरू अस ओन दिल-म अपर सोचीस । अनिक कोइन ओ-ला काही नही देइस ॥